

Jose Peo

Candidate for Rochester City Council

Northwest District

- Name one issue on which you disagree with the current administration and why.

Browning out or closing of any Firehouses. If we are trying to save money in our city's budget by putting our homes, family and children at risk, then it is not worth the cost savings. We can easily come up with other tax saving methods from less necessary programs.

- What is the most important issue facing your district, and what is a specific proposal or action you propose to address it?

The most important issue facing the NW is the lack of action and response from the Northwest Service Center (NWSC). Too many times have neighbors called to address issues such as blight and nuisance, with little to no reaction from our service center. Case in point: We had a local business in Charlotte that had all of their front windows shattered for months. When we contacted the NWSC to get help, their answer at our monthly Charlotte Community Association meeting was "we cannot get a hold of the owner because their hours of operation are in the evening." That is unacceptable. You're telling me that no one could make a surprise visit at 6 p.m. to address this issue when they opened their doors? That is pure lack of motivation to help the citizens you serve, and I will make sure I hold our service center accountable to our neighborhoods, all of them.

- Please identify one area in the city budget where you think the city should commit more resources than is currently proposed and why.

RFD and RPD since they are drastically understaffed and require the current employees to work massive OT to meet the needs of the city.

- What policies would you pursue to address housing affordability, evictions and/or landlord-tenant relations in your district?

I have a plan to increase the HPAP grant from \$3,000 to \$6,000, which will cover most (if not all) of the closing costs to purchase a home in the city, leaving them to come up with the down payment. I would also decrease the required contracted time it takes to close on these contracts from 90 days to 75 days, which would make the buyer's offer more attractive to sellers, which will allow them to beat out foreign investors who will buy a home, put little to no money into it, and rent it out for as long as the house stays upright, all while raising the rent every year. As soon as the costs to upkeep the home gets too high, they allow it to go into tax foreclosure and put it on the taxpayer's dime to tear it down. That is unacceptable and should come with consequences.

- Will you vote for the Police Accountability Board as proposed in November – why or why not?

I know the city has put many years of time and effort into getting adequate public and private input, in order to come up with the best solution to meet the greater need of our city. So yes, I will vote for the current proposal.

- Do you support Mayor Warren's push for a referendum calling for removal of the elected school board in favor of a state takeover of RCSD/appointed board, and why?

Not at all! There is no way that the state knows what is best for the children of Rochester, and I believe in the elected school board, as long as they have some form of continuity, and seek the appropriate input from the teachers themselves as to how to fix our schools. We must allow them

to do their job and allow input from various sources not related to government or politics. While I do believe something drastic must happen, I do not believe it is in our best interest to allow the Mayor or the state to take full control of our school system.

- What current policy or practice of city government would you seek to change if (re)elected, and why?

I would love to see the city council broken down into Wards, and each ward elects their own representative who is directly responsible to their constituents, and get rid of At-Large seats.